

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 16640

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, TECH, SA, GW, PFOR

SUBJECT: FRG-SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR COOPERATION

REF: A) BONN 16108

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFFS ON ANOTHER SUBJECT, MFA OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF NUCLEAR MATTERS, ROUGET, REFERRED TO THE CURRENT CONTROVERSY OVER FRG-SOUTH AFRICAN RELATIONSHIP AND REITERATED THE STANDARD FRG POSITION THAT THERE WAS IN FACT NO FIRE AND THAT THE APPARENT SMOKE WAS THE RESULT OF STRONG BLACK AFRICAN FEARS AND FEELINGS, ALBEIT LEGITIMATE, ABOUT APARTHEID, COUPLED WITH PRESS DISTORTIONS. HE FELT THAT THE FRG WAS BEING UNFAIRLY SINGLED OUT BY THE BLACK AFRICANS FOR CRITICISM IN THIS REGARD. NEVERTHELESS, HE OBSERVED THAT SOME FRG OFFICIALS AND MILITARY OFFICERS HAD PERHAPS NOT BEEN CAREFUL ENOUGH IN PREVENTING MISUNDERSTANDING BY THE EVER-EAGER SOUTH AFRICANS. "AFTER THREE GLASSES OF WHISKY", HE SAID, "MEN CAN INTERPRET THINGS THAT THEY HEAR IN VARIOUS WAYS AND USUALLY IN THE WAYS
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THEY WOULD LIKE THEM TO BE." ROUGET REGRETTE THAT

THE "SHENANIGANS" OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY MIGHT
ENDANGER GERMAN EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES.

2. FOREIGN POLICY ADVISER TO THE CHANCELLERY,
DR. LOECK, IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH ECON/COMM
MINISTER REMARKED THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR
REACTOR SALES MIGHT HAVE TO BE LEFT TO THE US, FRENCH
AND OTHERS IN ORDER TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT TO THE FRG.

3. COMMENT: WE SUSPECT FROM THE DISCOMFORT
DISPLAYED BY BOTH OFFICIALS IN DISCUSSING THIS SUBJECT
THAT THERE ARE OTHER POSSIBLE SOURCES OF EMBARRASSMENT
TO THE FRG WHICH HAVE NOT YET BEEN REVEALED. ALTHOUGH
STATEMENTS BY GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN IN RECENT DAYS
HAVE NOT FORECLOSED CONTINUED PARTICIPATION OF
KRAFTWERK UNION IN THE COMPETITION FOR THE NUCLEAR
REACTOR SALE TO SOUTH AFRICA (SEPTTEL), IT SEEMS THAT
THERE IS SENTIMENT IN THE FRG FAVORING GERMAN
WITHDRAWAL FROM COMPETITION FOR REACTOR CONTRACT. END
COMMENT.
HILLENBRAND

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